RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

A MARKED increase in the amount of railway receipts on the leading lines has of late been observed. In each of two weeks lately past, the Great Western receipts were from 2,000*l.* to 2,500*l.* over the corresponding weeks of 1847; while in the London and North-Western, the returns of one week shew a like increase of upwards of 4,000*l.* The London and South-Western traffic for each of two weeks exceeds the traffic for the same weeks last year by upwards of 1,200*l.* There is also a large increase in the traffic on the South-Eastern and London and Brighton, while the returns of one week for the Eastern Counties give an increase of nearly 5,000*l.* over the returns of the same week last year.——On the bringing up of the London Bridge and New Cross Stations Bill of the Brighton and South Coast line, in the Commons lately, Captain Pechell "complained of the indisposition of the company to consult the convenience of the poorer class of railway travellers. When the railway opened, three third-class trains ran each way; now there was only the Parliamentary train; [and that, by the way, he might have added, was the train to which this great company 'could not afford' to contribute the luxury, or rather the decency, of a half-penny candle at night out of the profits of the numerous 'traffic' of both sexes crowded into each carriage.] The number of stations at which the cheap trains stopped had also been diminished. In his opinion it would be desirable to introduce a stipulation into every railway bill to prevent stations once opened from being shut up." Mr. Greenfell said that "the public frequently entertained unreasonable expectations as to the conveniences which railway companies ought to afford;" and in proof of his assertion he might have adduced the 'unreasonable expectations' and the 'rejected addresses' of the poor people forming the Parliamentary train traffic, to the officials, for the convenience just alluded to; or the fact also noted by us some time ago, that even the convenience of a traffic-table or printed notice of times of starting was unreasonably expected, as it could not be afforded, even amongst several first-class or second-class passengers, though not half a farthing's actual value off each fare!——The new station at Chester, now in course of erection, occupies a space of ground about a quarter of a mile in length. It was commenced but a few months back, and is now almost completed. The design appears to be well adapted for the purpose by Mr. Thompson, architect, who furnished plans for the Derby and other railway stations. Mr. Brassey is the contractor. Some of the sheds are from 700 to 800 feet long, and are covered with light iron roofs. Mr. George Holme, of Liverpool, is the superintendent of the works, assisted, as foreman, by Mr. Wm. Stewart, and, as clerk, by Mr. Wm. Barr, all of course acting under the architect. This is said to be the largest public building of the kind in this country.——Mr. R. Stephenson, at a dinner at Conway, stated, relative to the 'tube,' that "It was about six or seven years ago that he had first conceived the notion; and the result, when that notion was promulgated in the proper quarter, was the proposed adoption of the plan on a small and experimental scale, but under the provisions of an Act of Parliament, which put so many limitations, and clogs, and fetters upon the undertaking, in the very first instance, as to render it utterly impracticable." Experiments at length took place, however, "by which to test and develop all the essential data and conditions. In these experiments he had had the able assistance of Mr. Fairbairn and Mr. Hodgkinson; and the realized matured result of their joint labours was now to be seen under the walls of the venerable castle."——The Great Western Railway Company have resolved to carry parcels not exceeding 12lbs. to distances not exceeding twenty miles for sixpence, including delivery.——On Monday last, a three-arched bridge on the Buckinghamshire Railway and across Bath-lane, Buckingham, fell into a complete ruin, from the sinking of the foundation of one of the piers.——On Wednesday week the key-stone of the last arch of the Bilton viaduct over the Nidd, near Harrogate, was lowered to its bed, "in all probability to remain for ages to come." The top of the viaduct is 106 feet from the bed of the river.——The railway works on the western side of Leeds, are proceeding rapidly, giving an altered aspect to the vicinity. The viaduct of the Leeds and Thirsk, supported on piers and circular arches of masonry, spans a great portion of the valley, and is a conspicuous object. Of a similar appearance is the viaduct of the Dewsbury line, approaching from the south to the river, on twenty arches, one of 75 feet span over the canal, and another of 105 feet span over the river; and continued by arches to the Wellington Hotel. South of the river it is nearly completed; and on the north side the work is proceeding with remarkable activity. The erection of a temporary station, near the Wellington Hotel, is resolved on, pending the question of the Central station scheme. The works on the Leeds, Dewsbury, and Manchester, are approaching rapidly to completion, and the last arch of the Morley tunnel was keyed on Tuesday week. This tunnel is in length 3,370 yards, or nearly two miles. The extreme breadth is 26 feet, and the height 26 feet: it is nearly level throughout. For executing the works 23 working shafts were employed, besides four permanent shafts. At one time workmen were employed at forty-eight different places. Eleven powerful steam-engines were employed, 15 double-horse gins, 330 horses, and about 2,000 workmen. Messrs. Shaw, Nowell, and Hattersley, were the contractors.——The works on the Great Northern, between Lincoln and Peterborough, are proceeding satisfactorily towards an opening in September.——The contract for building extensive goods-warehouses, &c. (Mr. John Dobson, architect), near the North Shields station, Newcastle, by the York, Newcastle, and Berwick Company, has been given to Mr. Richard Cail, at 20,000*l.* The contract for corn warehouses (Messrs. J. and B. Green, architects), near same place, has been given to Messrs. Rush and Lawton, at 13,000*l.*——The Dundee and Perth large timber bridge is in rapid progress. The arches are to be curved, by which means an additional 5 feet of space between the water and the bridge will be gained.——A vessel from Boulogne has brought over an entire cargo of railway materials, consisting of 190 waggons in pieces, 49 crossings, and 380 wheels and axletrees. More have since arrived.——The French Minister of Finance has formally announced to the National Assembly the long-threatened seizure of the railways by the Government on the terms already rejected by the shareholders, and payable, not in money, but in *rentes* of comparatively little value. The assembly, however, seem to have a strong sense of justice among them on this subject; but it remains to be seen whether the feeling is entertained by an effectual majority or not.——The *Cincinnati Gazette* details successive, but unavailing endeavours to cross a small prairie of 80 acres with the Mad River Railway. The works repeatedly sank, and it was discovered that the soil consisted of vegetable matter 6 to 8 feet deep, which floated on a subterranean lake containing fish, and 30 feet in depth. A deviation of the line was ultimately made.

THE IRON TRADE.

SCARCELY had the sustainment of previous prices being determined on by 'the great masters' at the last of those 'great humbug' meetings, by means of which they attempt, or pretend, to rule the rate of the market price of iron, from quarter to quarter, when it was announced—by the same thorough-going advocate who was formally snubbed at a previous meeting for his over-zealous endeavours to screw up prices beyond the mark which even the great masters desired, or rather, beyond that which they felt to be available,—that, on the contrary, several of the rulers of the roast had, forthwith, fairly cut downwards, and that pretty close to the bone too, for the sake of private pickings.

Taking up the line of policy thus laid down *pro tem.* by the doubtless offended advocate of 'great masters' and of 'high prices,' a local contemporary forthwith bids for the vacant office, by assuring those who will believe it, that "not one of the *principal* houses has departed from the prices fixed last quarter day;" that if the recreant "would be frank enough to tell the public that the class whose dealings *he* reports, and of whose buyings and sellings, alternate prosperity and adversity, *he* invariably writes, is *not* the one that rules the market of the district,—his reports would be harmless;" but that "*he* confounds isolated instances of the *necessity* to realise, at any price, with the market generally, and arrives at conclusions opposed to fact, and therefore dangerous;" whereas, "all who are in any way acquainted with the trade, know that there is a class of makers who, from their pecuniary circumstances, or from the inferior make of their iron, never profess to adhere to the fixed tariff."

In the rejoinder, then, to this 'unkindest cut' of all in so amusing an exhibition of party tactics, we have, of course, not only a re-assertion of the original announcement, but a still deeper dig into the bread-basket of the reprovers by whom he was so unkindly thrown overboard. "We observe," says he, "that the correspondent of a contemporary, who lately favoured his readers with the assurance of a 'further advance,' is now 'desirous of giving the most explicit contradiction' to the fact of a reduction having been submitted to, though 'the trade,' he says, 'may be prepared for a fall in prices to the extent, say of 20s.,' at next quarter day.' We need not, however, inform 'the trade' that they are already in full enjoyment of this fall of 20s., or rather 30s., as merchant iron is very generally supplied in Liverpool at 7*l.* 10s. to 7*l.*, and may be purchased at the works here at proportionate rates. The question is, whether we have arrived at the lowest point, or whether something even further than the sanctioning of what has been done may not be required before any reaction takes place? In the accounts from Liverpool, dated the 26th inst., we read —'We have still to report a downward tendency in the market.' We are as unwilling as any one possibly can be to offer remarks that might have an injurious tendency, but we are aware that information to be useful must be early, as well as scrupulously correct; and having been kindly allowed access to the first sources, we have no hesitation in giving it to the public."

Leaving these local doctors to differ as they may, we have, from various sources, corroborated by a Birmingham correspondent of the *Morning Herald*, the most explicit confirmation of the fact, not only that several, but that "many houses of respectability have already felt the pressure, and been obliged to yield to a reduction of price; and that it is all but certain that, unless some unexpected improvement take place between now and the forthcoming quarterly meeting of the trade, a still further decline of 20s. per ton must take place." The fate of the operatives, in the midst of these class reverses, is most severe and much to be deplored.

THE SEWERS, THE THAMES, AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

SIR,—In commencing, as it were, a new era in the drainage of London, the merits of every plan for improvement which may be suggested should receive the fullest consideration, and the more they are publicly discussed the more likely are we to bring clearly to view such objections as present a probability of interference with the practical advantages that may be theoretically promised for them. I cannot lay claim to originality with respect to the system it is my intention to advocate, inasmuch that within three days after having communicated my ideas upon the subject to several gentlemen, I was favoured with a copy of Mr. Ellerman's letter upon sanitary reform, addressed to Lord Morpeth, suggesting a plan for disposing of the solid refuse of towns, identically the same with that which had occurred to my mind. Those who take an interest in the subject will do well to peruse this letter, but for the information of those of your readers who may not have the opportunity of so doing, I will as briefly as possible, and without entering upon estimates, describe how it is proposed to collect and turn to account the soil which at present pollutes our rivers, by passing into them through the sewers, or creates equally mischievous consequences by the necessity for so many separate imperfectly-constructed private cesspools.

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